



SOUTHERN URBAN FORESTRY  
TECHNICAL SERVICE CENTER

# Urban Forestry Update

## S T A T E   A C T I V I T I E S

### Urban-Rural Interface

Winter 1999

**T**his edition of the *Urban Forestry Update* takes a close look at activities in the Southern Region that address urban-rural interface issues. Urban-rural interface, urban-wildland interface and urban-wildland intermix are all terms that describe the transitional zone in which land uses begin to change from urban uses associated with land development, to more agricultural or rural forestry land uses. Within this gradient, from a city's urban center to its rural fringes, issues such as forest fragmentation, varying land and social values, and numerous landowners create new challenges in the management of these interface areas. Through this update and other information exchanges, we hope to spread knowledge, to enlighten, and to plant seeds for new, effective and more innovative ideas in the growing future of urban forestry.

## Conferences and Training

### 9th Annual Georgia Urban Forest Council Conference - Natural Capital: *The Value of the Community Forest* (Athens, GA)

This conference addressed several issues related to the urban-rural interface, such as air and water quality, open space, energy conservation, and stormwater management. Keynote speakers included Randall Arendt of Natural Lands Trust, and Diane Relf of Virginia Tech. A resource book, *Tools to Assess the Value of the Community Forest Resource*, was developed and distributed to conference attendees. The conference was held on October 14-16, 1998, in Athens Georgia. Contact Dudley Hartel at (706) 783-3984.

### Virginia Urban Forest Council Annual Conference — Growing Together: *Building Urban Rural Partnerships* (Harrisonburg, VA)

This state conference held in 1997 focused on a variety of urban-rural interface issues such as the benefits of building with trees and the impacts of urbanization on the rural forest landowner. It also included a trade show and a forum addressing urban-rural interface issues from across the state. Contact the Virginia Urban Forest Council at (540) 231-2411.



Custom sawing demonstration at the Annual Small Scale Forestry Field Day. (Photo courtesy of N. Carolina Cooperative Extension Service)

### The Annual Small Scale Forestry in the Urban-Rural Interface Field Day (Raleigh, NC)

For the past few years, the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and the Division of Forest Resources have sponsored the Annual Small Scale Forestry in the Urban-Rural Interface Field Day. This event focuses on forestry for small wood-lot owners and features exhibits with information about interface activities and urban forestry in North Carolina. The next conference is scheduled for the spring of 1999. Contact Robert Bardon at (919) 515-5575.

### Urban-Rural Interface Course (North Carolina)

The North Carolina Division of Forest Resources has developed a course, *Technical Foundations for Urban Forestry*, for field foresters and county rangers which provides information on how to address urban-rural interface challenges. Contact Virginia Russell at (919) 733-2162 extension 253.

### Conservation Design Workshop (Nacogdoches, TX)

The Pineywoods and Southeast Texas Resource Conservation and Design



offices sponsored two workshops which featured Randall Arendt of the Natural Lands Trust in November 1998. The workshops focused on conservation subdivision design principles that incorporate natural and agricultural elements into residential design. Workshop attendees participated in a hands-on design demonstration project. The workshop was designed for regional planners, developers, architects, landscape architects, urban foresters, and homeowners. Two developers were chosen to work with Arendt on local demonstration projects. Contact Ken Autrev at (409) 568-0414.

### **Tree Ordinance Workshop**

(Athens, GA)

The Georgia Urban Forest Council sponsored a Tree Ordinance Workshop during their annual conference in 1998. The workshop included information on the following topics: legal right to exist, parts of a tree ordinance, tree ordinance development and administration, and community vision. A Georgia Forestry Commission publication, *The Urban Tree Ordinance Development Workbook*, was distributed. Contact Joe Burgess at (770) 528-3195.

### **Tree Ordinance Development Workshop**

(Wake County, NC)

This ordinance workshop will focus on the different types of tree ordinances and the resources needed to develop them in different communities. The audience for this workshop includes the Homebuilders Associations, North Carolina Chapter of American Public Works, urban foresters, and landscape architects. The workshop has a tentative date of September 14, 1999. Contact James Mitchell at (336) 748-3162.

### **Georgia Urban-Rural Interface Workshops**

(Georgia)

The Georgia Forestry Commission coordinated two workshops for staff foresters on how to tackle emerging urban-rural interface issues: *The County Forest Resource Assessment Meeting* (1996) and the *Urban-Rural Interface Institute* (1997). Contact Joe Burgess at (770) 528-3195.

### **Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program**

(Georgia)

For the past two years, the Georgia Forestry Commission targeted their urban and community forestry grant program on urban rural interface projects. Contact Joe Burgess at (770) 528-3195.

## **Community Development & Management Plans**

### **Bayou Preservation**

(Houston, TX)

The Bayou Preservation Association was formed to promote natural alternatives to destructive stormwater channelization for flood control. The Bayou Preservation Association is a grassroots organization that promotes sound wetland management in the form of flood plain buy-out programs, regional detention basins, and flood plain management planning. They also provide education on tree planting and protection. Contact Mary Ellen Whitworth at (713) 529-6443.

### **Treescape**

(Houston, TX)

The Park People, Trees for Houston, and Scenic Houston organizations have come together to create the Treescape committee. This committee is a collaborative partnership formed to influence the character and development of the city. The committee spearheaded a monumental effort to initiate a tree protection ordinance for Houston. It also coordinates educational programs for planners, engineers, architects, builders, and contractors on how to minimize the impact land developments have on urban natural resources. Contact Mickey Merritt at (713) 861-4225.

### **Upland Enhancement Tree**

**Salvage Program** (Palm Beach, FL)

Under this partnership between Palm Beach County and local municipalities, trees on public or private property which are marked for removal due to impending development are relocated to public property. A student intern under the supervision of the county forester is coordinating this project. Contact Mike Greenstein at (561) 233-2421.

### **Grenada Branching Out**

(Grenada, MS)

The small but growing city of Grenada is using Citygreen technology to manage undeveloped areas that were recently annexed to the city. This project is a joint effort involving the Grenada Chamber of Commerce, Civil Defense Department, Mississippi Forestry Commission, and American Forests. Contact Wanda Garner at (601) 226-2571.

### **Tree Protection Ordinance Development**

(Texas)

Many communities in Texas have adopted tree protection ordinances in recent years. Cities that are currently developing ordinances or have recently instituted ordinances are Southlake, Denton, Lufkin, and Lake Jackson. Contact John Giedraitis at (409) 845-2641.

### **Keeping the "Woods" in The**

**Woodlands** (The Woodlands, TX)

The Woodlands is a planned community that requires the protection of a substan-



Homes in The Woodlands are almost hidden due to the communities' resource conservation development plan. (Photo courtesy of WCA-Woodlands Community Association)



tial amount of forest cover during and after development. Some residents of The Woodlands were clearing understorey and mid-story native vegetation and replacing it with non-native vegetation and lawns. Because of this, The Woodlands GREEN (GrassRoots Environmental Education Network), and The Woodlands community associations began an educational program on identifying native trees and plants to encourage residents to preserve and use native flora in the landscape. Contact Lynne Aldrich or Kathie Herrick at (281) 367-5647.

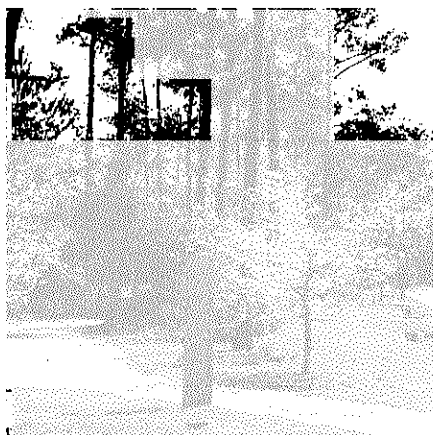
### Community Landfill Planting

(Fort Smith, AR)

This project is the result of a merger between the Fort Smith Department of Sanitation and the Department of Parks and Recreation. From this union, an effort to improve the quality of life through tree planting was enacted by planting a buffer zone of pine trees between a landfill and the neighboring community. Contact Dan Reikes at (501) 784-2431

### Madison Project (Madison, MS)

A partnership involving the City of Madison, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Mississippi Forestry Commission, and Mississippi Wildlife Federation was formed to develop a natural resource management plan for Madison and its surrounding watershed area. An inventory of resources has been completed and the development of educational activities, a manual, videos, and demonstration sites are underway. Contact Donna Yowell at (601) 353-6922.



Native flora conservation along roadways in The Woodlands community. (Photo courtesy of WCA-Woodlands Community Association)

## Outdoor Classroom

### Outdoor Classrooms (Arkansas)

Several schools across Arkansas are adopting outdoor classrooms as a way to bring rural ecology into the classrooms of urbanized areas. These outdoor classrooms focus mainly on the native fauna of rural areas and show students the changes brought on by land development and the importance of incorporating native species into the landscape. Contact Patti Erwin at (501) 442-8627



Lake Hamilton Middle School students enjoy Wild Wolf Park, which has nature trails and an outdoor classroom. (Photo courtesy of Arkansas Forestry Commission)

### Amphitheater Used To Teach about Native Wildlife

(Fayetteville, AR)

Parkview Elementary in the Van Buren School District is constructing an amphitheater for education about native flora and fauna. Students will also plant trees for wildlife habitat, construct bird feeders and houses, plant a wildflower meadow, and build a nature trail. Contact Lucy Tausinger at (501) 474-8730.

### Charlotte Harbor Community Forestry Program

(Charlotte Harbor, FL)

The Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center has developed an educational program for the public about the ecological functions, processes, and values of healthy forests. The environmental center also created a new staff position, Natural Resource Manager, to coordinate this program. Contact Joy Duperault at (941) 505-8243.

## Multimedia Activities and Resources

### Fire-Safe Video (Birmingham, AL)

The Alabama Urban-Wildland Interface Advisory Board produced a video for homeowners about how to maintain their yards and homes to prevent damage from fires that occur in the urban-wildland interface. Contact Harry Kepler at (205) 339-0929.

### Georgia Urban-Rural Interface Brochure (Atlanta, GA)

The Georgia Forestry Commission is developing a brochure for the public that addresses how tree canopy loss impacts air and water quality, wildlife, and fire. Contact Joe Burgess at (770) 528-3195.

### Urban-Rural Interface

#### Presentation Tools (Atlanta, GA)

The Georgia Forestry Commission has developed two slide presentations addressing urban-rural interface issues. The first presentation discusses attitudes about the loss of tree canopy cover in rural areas. The second explores the impact of urbanization on the aesthetic benefits of clean air and water. Contact Joe Burgess at (770) 528-3195.

### Urban-Rural Interface Tool Kit

(Atlanta, GA)

The Georgia Forestry Commission is developing an *Urban-Rural Interface Tool Kit* for their staff foresters. With fact sheets, presentation tips, a tree ordinance publication, a technical glossary, slide shows and best management practices for homeowners and builders, this kit is loaded with tools to help staff foresters work with communities. Contact Joe Burgess at (770) 528-3195.

### Woodscaping Publication

(Raleigh, NC)

To assist small wood-lot landowners with the management of their land where urban influences and aesthetics are a constant concern, the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service developed the publication *Woodscaping Your Woodlands*. The publication discusses the concept of woodscaping.



which is the technique that combines woodland management and landscape architecture. Contact Robert Bardon at (919) 515-5575.



Participants at a Woodscaping Your Woodlands Workshop. (Photo courtesy of N. Carolina Cooperative Extension Service)

### **Firewise Landscaping Publication** (Blacksburg, VA)

The publication *Virginia Firescapes - Firewise Landscaping for Woodland Homes* tells woodland homeowners how to protect their homes from forest fires. For example, the publication identifies the three landscaping zones and the vegetation that should be planted in each zone. The Virginia Department of Forestry cooperatively developed the publication with Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Land Stewards of North America, and Virginia Dare Soil and Water Conservation District. Contact Cindy Frenzel at (540) 459-3151.

## **Interface Committees and Councils**

### **Urban-Wildland Interface Advisory Board** (Birmingham, AL)

The Alabama Urban-Wildland Interface Advisory Board has been active in addressing urban-wildland interface issues for the past seven years. The advisory board has worked to provide training and activities for professionals and private citizens in urban-wildland interface areas in Alabama. Members of the board include representatives from the Transportation Authority, Alabama Emergency Management Agency, county commissions, Alabama Forestry Commission, insurance agencies, urban foresters and professionals from the construction industry, and fire and police departments. The annual award "Fire-Safe in the Interface" is presented

to individuals or groups exemplifying outstanding service concerning urban-wildland interface issues. Contact Harry Kepler at (205) 339-0929.

### **Southern Regional Urban-Wildland Interface Council**

In 1992, the Southern Group of State Foresters and the USDA Forest Service - Southern Region created this council to address forest conservation and management issues in the south. Contact Bettina Ring at (804) 977-1375 extension 3390 or Ed Macie at (404) 347-1647.

## **Interface Staff Positions**

### **Urban-Rural Interface Coordinator** (Marietta, GA)

In 1997, the Georgia Forestry Commission created the position of Urban-Rural Interface Coordinator to address the growing issues related to the urban-rural interface. The coordinator's primary responsibilities include program development and technology transfer to provide assistance to local foresters who work with communities facing urban-rural interface issues. Contact Joe Burgess at (770) 528-3195.

### **Extension Specialist** (Raleigh, NC)

In 1997, the Cooperative Extension Service in North Carolina hired a specialist with an emphasis in urban-rural interface issues. Contact Robert Bardon at (919) 515-5575.

### **Fire and the Urban-Rural Interface** (Tallahassee, FL)

The Florida Division of Forestry - Forest Protection Bureau has a position designated to urban-rural interface issues and fire. The Fire Prevention Coordinator is responsible for forest protection as well as fire training, prevention and mitigation in the interface. Contact Matt Weinell at (850) 922-0663.

### **Interface Forester Position** (Conroe, TX)

The Texas Forest Service currently has an interface forester located in the Conroe District. The Interface Forester's responsibilities include fire prevention and urban forestry issues for the Houston area and surrounding counties. Contact John Ross at (409) 273-2261.

## **Research**

### **Management of Southern Pine Flatwoods with Prescribed Fire** (Davie, FL)

Florida Atlantic University is conducting a study of the ecology of fire and native species in the urban environment. The objective of this study is to determine, with fire as one of the affecting elements, the best way to establish a community of native species that can regenerate themselves and compete against invasive exotics. Contact John Volin at (954) 236-1115.

This bulletin is also available in an electronic format through State and Private Forestry on the Southern Region website at <http://www.r8web.com/spi/urban.htm>. Please call (706) 559-4225 for more information on the Urban Forestry Update Series.

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## **Websites**

American Farmland Trust.....	<a href="http://www.farmland.org">http://www.farmland.org</a>
American Planning Association.....	<a href="http://www.planning.org">http://www.planning.org</a>
California Fire Safe Council.....	<a href="http://www.firesafecouncil.org">http://www.firesafecouncil.org</a>
Federal Emergency Management Agency.....	<a href="http://www.fema.gov">http://www.fema.gov</a>
Firewise.....	<a href="http://www.firewise.org">http://www.firewise.org</a>
Land Trust Alliance.....	<a href="http://www.lta.org/index.html">http://www.lta.org/index.html</a>
National Interagency Fire Council.....	<a href="http://www.nifc.gov">http://www.nifc.gov</a>
The Official Smokey Bear.....	<a href="http://www.smokeybear.com">http://www.smokeybear.com</a>
The Trust for Public Land.....	<a href="http://www.tpl.org/tpl">http://www.tpl.org/tpl</a>
Wildlife Land Trust.....	<a href="http://www.wlt.org">http://www.wlt.org</a>